

# child study

A quarterly journal of parent education



## Aggressiveness in children

When is it healthy . . .  
and when  
a danger signal?

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Fall 1957

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Edwyn portrait

Alfred D. Buchmueller

## Welcome to new director

**T**he Child Study Association of America is happy to welcome its new Executive Director, Alfred D. Buchmueller. His wide background in preventive mental health and parent education will be an invaluable resource for the Association. The traditional study and strengthening of good relations between parents and children, the training of professional workers in parent education, and the growing research program all stand to gain vitally from his knowledge and interest.

A graduate of Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois, Mr. Buchmueller received his master's degree in social work from Washington University, School of Social Work, in St. Louis, Missouri. It was in St. Louis that he also gained experience in public welfare work, and in casework with families. Since 1939, he has been on the staff of the Washington University Medical School Department of Psychiatry, and in 1940 also joined the faculty of the University's School of Social Work. Beginning in 1947, Mr. Buchmueller directed a four year experimental program of group therapy with the mothers of children with behavior problems, one outcome of which was the development of new leadership training groups in parent education. Since 1951, he has been director of the Mental Health Service Division of the St. Louis County Health Department.

The CSAA board and staff look forward to working with Mr. Buchmueller and extend cordial greetings to him and his family.

MRS. CLARENCE K. WHITEHILL,  
*President, CSAA*

# The beginnings of aggressiveness in children

The baby's play and explorations are first expressions of that "drive" which he needs in later life. Restraints should come gradually—and gently

The words aggressive and aggression are generally used to express criticism. The figures of speech we use to describe an aggressive person illustrate this very clearly. We talk of a person who "elbows his way," "steps on people's toes," "walks all over people," or who "has a biting tongue" or "makes cutting remarks." These figures of speech also show that muscular activity enters into the common picture of aggression.

Because it is customary to think of aggression as an undesirable character trait in human beings, we forget that aggression, in the widest sense of the term, is a vital necessity for existence and for the enjoyment of activity. Everywhere in nature we observe the "struggle for life" and "the survival of the fittest." There is no doubt that only the strongest animals and plants survive, frequently at the expense of the weaker ones. And if we look at human beings we find that the same thing is true, at least to a certain extent.

However, the human situation is very different from that of the plant and animal world. The role of love in human society is much greater than with animals, despite such evidences of attachment as the care

that animals give their young, or lasting partnerships between male and female birds, or the love which some domesticated animals—such as dogs—show their masters. Human beings have a greater capacity to love, as well as a need to be loved, and a far greater variety in their expressions of love.

In spite of this, human beings do have strong aggressive tendencies. It is the very difficult task of parents and educators to accept this and to help the young child to channel his aggression in such a way that it will be available to him for survival and enjoyment, but with the least possible detriment to other human beings. One would like to be able to say, with *no* detriment to others, but often this is not possible. For example, if two children want to play with the same toy one can help the children learn to take turns, to give and take. But

---

Dr. Geleerd, originally from the Netherlands, is in private practice in New York. She is on the faculty of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, and her publications in various professional journals have dealt with problems concerning adults as well as children.

if it is a matter of applying for admission to a school or for a job, only one can be chosen, and the other will be hurt. The loser has a difficult task in learning to accept this decision and move on to other challenges; but the one who is chosen should be able to take the place in school, or the position, without feeling that he has no right to it, or that he should give it up to someone else.

We have said that aggression in human beings is mitigated by their capacity to love. But frustration in love also arouses hostility. If the love one feels for another is not returned, or not in the desired way, the response is a feeling of sadness and depression, or loneliness. There is also anger against the person who does not return the love, though this may not always come through to consciousness because human beings learn early in life to suppress much of their anger and resentment.

#### **Healthy outlets**

A natural outlet for aggressive impulses is through muscular activity. As an infant grows we see how he gradually learns to focus his eyes, move his arms and legs; start to roll over, pull himself up; move on all fours, sit up, walk. As he develops these abilities one by one, the infant experiments with them in a playful way. We can see that his attempts to develop skills are enjoyable and when he succeeds in any activity he is especially happy and often laughs out loud.

Play is the healthiest outlet for aggression because enjoyment of the activity becomes as much a part of it as the original aggression. If this early play and learning occur in an atmosphere of satisfaction, a basic step toward the capacity to enjoy life has been made. It is not always possible, of course, to provide an atmosphere of contentment and pleasure. If an infant is sickly or the environment unloving and harsh, then the avenue for a socially acceptable form of aggression is at least partially blocked.

The little child expresses his emotions

immediately and completely. When an infant is comfortable he will sleep or look around contentedly; when a little older he will gurgle or play with his hands and feet or a toy. But when he feels a pain or is hungry or needs to be "cleaned up," he will cry loudly to express his discomfort. There is a popular belief in some quarters that it is healthy for an infant to cry—good for its lungs. Also it is frequently thought that it is not good for the infant, emotionally, to tend him every time he is in need: he will be spoilt; he will want to be held or to have the adult come running to him all the time; if he does not learn early in life that he has to wait, that he cannot always obtain satisfaction, then he will never learn. Unfortunately, the infant has not reached the stage where he is ready to learn these hard lessons.

So far as one can surmise from analytic work with older children and adults, the infant's crying is an expression of his frustration, anxiety or rage, and of his helplessness to alleviate his own pain or discomfort caused by illness or unavoidable unhappiness. However, when simple situations can be remedied and are attended to, the infant's first experiences in life will be those of basic satisfaction, contentment and pleasure. He cannot express his feeling of well-being in words, but shows it in a happy expression, laughter and an outgoing attitude towards the environment.

#### **Too much too soon**

There are great individual differences among infants in the amount of frustration, pain and loneliness they can stand without too much feeling of deprivation. While one should not over-stimulate an infant and give him too much fondling and company, it is important to be attuned to the individual baby and to use common sense without too much purposeful "educating" at this stage.

In the first year of life the guiding principles should be the comfort and well-being of the baby and protection from danger. When the infant begins to move about,

to use his muscles and explore and learn, he will have to be protected from hurting himself, since he has only a rudimentary knowledge of the outside world. But how angry and frustrated he will be when he is stopped from doing something he wants to do! If his parents or nurses believe in teaching him by too much sternness and discipline at this early age the child will perceive the world as a hard and frustrating place.

On the other hand, I recall a mother who thought that all frustration harmed young infants emotionally. Thus when her baby wanted to put his fingers in an electric contact or crawled too close to the steps she did not stop him. This baby certainly learned the hard way. He received so many bruises and had so many accidents—fortunately only minor—that he became quite fearful of new experiences. He also felt unprotected by his mother and blamed her for the hurts and pains. Moreover, he started to perceive the world as a dangerous and basically unfriendly place, and to feel hostile toward it. Infants and young children need to feel that they can rely on their environment and the people in it, so that as they mature they may begin to love both.

Their explorations, which for them are pure enjoyment, sooner or later get them

into trouble. When they set their teeth in the finger of the person who is holding them or pull his hair or tear up a page in the book he is reading, the adult reacts. Much depends on these reactions. The child has to learn what he can and can not do. No adult can avoid the startled reaction of pain when he is hurt by the child, or of alarm when he sees the child about to hurt himself. But as soon as he recovers from the first shock it is important that the adult should not be harsh or punitive, because the child did not know what he was doing—the startle reaction sufficiently conveys to him that he is doing something he should not. The infant's love is mainly one of needing to be loved—it is not yet the giving type of loving. But he cannot tolerate losing love and he will try not to do what causes displeasure.

#### *The effects of harsh punishment*

If the people around him show their disapproval of the young child by slapping, or by isolating him for a long time, or by ignoring him, then he will get the impression that the enjoyment of his muscular activities or his explorations of the world are bad. He may then curb them or partially give them up, or lose the sense of pleasure they should normally give him. Of

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how much can we ask of our children?

March 24th, 1958

Hotel Roosevelt, N. Y. C.



## Twelfth Annual Institute for Workers in Parent Education

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course, a single instance of such treatment is not going to harm a child's emotional development. But adults generally have a set pattern of reacting, and one can assume that a parent who punishes a child for misbehavior believes in punishment and will regularly treat the child this way. Certainly children have to learn what is right and wrong, what is dangerous for themselves and others and what is not. But they should be able to understand why they are being punished, and the punishment should never be harsh. Moreover, parents should always bear in mind how much can be accomplished in other ways and resort to punishment only when it is impossible to teach an important lesson by other methods.

**Sad discovery: "I'm not the only one!"**

When the infant starts to understand his environment he finds out that he is not the center of the universe. Originally he thought that his parents and brothers and sisters were there only for him, to tend to his needs and to please him and to do what he wants when he wants it. Eventually he finds out that they have lives of their own and love each other and that he is not their one and only concern. This is one of the most important discoveries in life, but the child's basic reaction to it is disappointment and resentment. If the mother plays with another child or has a visitor, he may show his resentment in many different ways. He may be difficult and demanding, or tearful, or try to distract her; or he may hit the other child or the visitor.

Again, it depends on the child's age how we handle the situation. When he is still very young, to punish him or talk harshly to him would be too much for him. It is important to distract or comfort him in a gentle way. When the child is older, one can discuss the incident with him and explain that his mother does not love him less because she pays attention to someone else. It does not help the older child to let him express his hostility in a direct way. Nobody can go through life hitting and kicking to get his own way, and it is better

for a child to learn this as soon as possible. But the lesson should be learned as much as possible through gentle persuasion.

**New problem of the toddler stage**

New problems in the handling of aggression come up in the toddler stage. In this period the child is "feeling his oats." He can move by himself, has achieved a considerable amount of muscular control and enjoys his activities immensely. He becomes more aggressive, takes what he wants, carries out his impulses to explore. It is also the time when an attempt may be made to toilet-train him. He resents being crossed; nevertheless, often he cannot be allowed to do what he wants and has to learn to obey. Thus real clashes of will occur during this period. The mother may feel that her child is stubborn and disobedient. It is difficult for her to find the middle way of gently protecting her child and gradually socializing him, and to avoid the extremes of either over-protecting him or giving him too much freedom.

**How conscience develops**

Trouble generally arises when a new baby is born. One of the hardest lessons in life is to give up one's place as the only child, or the youngest. The child would like to destroy or get rid of the interloper. Some children do not mind the new baby while it is very small and does not get in their way. Others resent it in the beginning, but soften toward it as it gets old enough to play with. The result in both cases is a mixture of feelings—love and hate. Since the feelings of hate and hostility are difficult to cope with, many of them are pushed underground, for the child has learned that he is not loved when he shows his anger and hostility. Here is where the development of the conscience is anchored. At first, the child will suppress his anger only when adults are around or when he thinks that he will be found out and punished or rejected. This is called social anxiety. Gradually, however, the decision to do the right thing becomes an internal one; then he will do what is right because he



wants to, because he will feel guilty if he does not.

The development of the real conscience takes a very long time. It is the internalized voice of the parents which says, "Do not be bad." It is important that this voice should not be a harsh one. If it is, the conscience becomes too strict and the person feels guilty too easily. This is the type who is not able to assert himself, who gives in too readily to others, who renounces too much. Sometimes such children and adults give the impression of being aggressive, and one senses the provocative elements in their behavior. Children of this type have a guilty conscience that leads them to seek punishment by being naughty and to feel satisfied only when they receive it.

#### ***The disguises of hostility***

Some children in the course of developing a conscience try to cope with their hostility by turning it into the opposite emotion. They become over-tender, over-sollicitous towards the object of their hostility, or to everyone, though they may become overly cruel to animals. Some become self-defeatists—their conscience does not allow them to succeed or to accomplish their aims. In later years these are the people who, although well-versed in the subject-matter, fail their examinations; or those who say just the wrong thing in an important situation. It is not always an over-strict environment that causes the too severe conscience. Sometimes children develop it when they themselves feel overwhelmed by the strength of their aggressions. It may be part of their make-up—what we call a "constitutional factor." But it is sometimes found in children who were given too much freedom to express their hostilities, whose parents feared they would develop too strict a conscience if they were restricted by the environment, but achieved the opposite result by their indulgence.

Closely related to the hostilities are the so-called death wishes. Primitive feelings of hate and the wish to hurt are extreme and later, when the concept of death has

been acquired, they become connected with the death wish. Since the idea prevails in the primitive mind that one will be punished in kind, many fears of dying or of getting hurt are related to feelings of hostility which were suppressed because of fear of retaliation.

Destructiveness, however, does not have to originate in hostility, although it easily becomes connected with it. For example, children may destroy property or the possessions of others in their attempts to explore the environment, through lack of adequate muscular coordination, or because of the pleasure they derive from the activities of pulling or tearing or scribbling.

It is a difficult task to help a child to curb his aggressions and feelings of hostility without limiting his capacity to assert himself and enjoy what is rightfully his. A few concrete suggestions may be helpful. In order to avoid the need to restrict a child too much and too early, parents should keep valuable possessions out of reach. If he does have an accident it is advisable not to make too much fuss about it. As far as his own possessions are concerned he should have more freedom.

Moreover, there should be consistency in the way children are handled. If they are warned that they will be punished for a misdemeanor, the punishment should be carried out. Parents should stand together as much as possible in their handling of situations—a child has a hard time developing a reliable conscience when his parents constantly disagree in front of him. Nevertheless, one must consider the possible effects on the child if both parents continually "gang up" against him, and an occasional difference of opinion between his parents will certainly not damage his confidence in them.

It is not only through these practical methods, but by an effort to understand the roots of aggression, that parents and educators can help children at different ages to become good members of society while keeping enough aggression to ensure a healthy and active life.



Little children are "quick change artists" when it comes to anger and love. Usually, danger looms only when anger continues to crowd out happier feelings

By Terry Spitalny

## Battles and "best friends" in the nursery school

As the true-to-life quality of this article suggests, the author has had long experience with nursery school children: at the Walden School, at Sarah Lawrence, and now at the New Lincoln School in New York, where she is director of the nursery-primary division.

Recently a visitor to a nursery school, whose son had gone to a similar school many years ago, was observing her little grandson's group. "It's hard to believe," she sighed, "they're still at it." "They" were two four-year-olds. "It" was a to-the-death struggle for a single block they had both started to take off the shelf at the same moment. The resolution of the fight probably hadn't changed, either, since the days when the visitor had watched her own small son and his friends engaged in such mighty battles: even as the teacher started to explain that there were innumerable other blocks exactly like the prized one, the enemies were in each other's arms swearing eternal love.

The grandmother's comment, of course, was quite innocent and made with the humor and objectivity which so many grandmothers feel free to enjoy when taking care of children for whom they don't have primary responsibility. Yet without giving it undue weight, we may wonder whether she was not echoing the exasperation which so many adults feel when confronted with a child's aggressive behavior,

whether overt or indirect. Was not her statement really more of a question: "Do children always *have* to hit and shout at each other? Isn't there some way we grown-ups could teach them not to, and avoid all these outbursts?"

Unfortunately, if the lady had voiced these common questions, there would have been few, if any, firm and inclusive answers to offer her. How disappointed and discouraged parents and teachers become with the inevitable "it depends on the child." But it does! Though we think we can say with assurance that all children have aggressive drives, it is the way in which each individual child expresses them that will determine what we should do—or try to do.

Perhaps we can offer one positive approach—we *do something*. We don't just resignedly sing "Whatever must be, must be," even though we admit that "the future's not ours to see." A fatalistic philosophy probably contributes to anxieties such as our visiting grandmother may have had. Certainly the feeling that things will just have to take their course has been part of a misunderstanding which has caused a

good deal of hardship for many children: some who suffer because they are not able to manage their toilet needs long after their peers have finished with toilet training; some of nine or ten who can't read; others who are living at levels grossly inappropriate to their ages, either withdrawing because it's too hard to face their own inadequacies or becoming over-aggressive to prove—to themselves—that they are okay.

We have said that we always do something about a child's aggressions. Sometimes the something is watching—not passive watching, but alert and careful watching. There are times when active intervention only seems to emphasize feelings of hostility which otherwise would be washed away in the unpredictable ebb and flow of children's interests and moods. The little boys who settled their fight before the teacher could "explain" to them are not unique. How often parents say bitterly in talking of their children's quarrels that they have been made to feel foolish when, as they try to discipline one child for being mean to another, the victim suddenly comes to the defense of the offender and makes the *parent* feel like the culprit!

#### **The balance of feelings**

So often, children seem to have read the book. First, they demonstrate the reality of feelings of aggression: someone takes something you want, and you get mad and put that anger into action. But then they go on to demonstrate that just because they act out their aggression doesn't mean they are necessarily dominated by such feelings. On the contrary, they have other strong feelings, needs, drives—they want to love and be loved, they want to be accepted. And one set of feelings does not exclude the other. Sometime in the future—probably the near future—the little boys who ended their quarrel as Best Friends will again want the same object at the same moment. But this time, perhaps, they will not come to blows. They may declare that "you're not my friend any more" or "you're dumb" or threaten "I won't invite you to my birth-

day party." But eventually they may take turns with the toy, or ask if there is another one like it. The aggressive feelings have not disappeared, but are being handled differently as the child's range of experience grows.

In such cases, the alert watchfulness was all that was called for. But, one might ask, is this long way round really necessary? Couldn't we have taken a short cut and at the first coming-to-blows have made it clear that fighting was not the way to solve problems and that it was forbidden? Surely this could be done kindly and the proper "ways" could be explained with patience.

Perhaps so. But then we must ask ourselves, what happens when you forbid the expression of so strong and real an emotion as anger—may not other feelings be held in check, too? If we tell our little boys that hitting is forbidden, we may stop the act, but the feelings that caused it are out of reach. If we *do* stop their urge to hit, will they be able to follow that other urge—which we applaud—to embrace each other and be exhilarated by having a friend? Children are not logical in their feelings (who is!) and it is not easy to curb one expression while being sure that another is not affected. I can remember a five-year-old coming to school covered with scratches who explained without ill feeling that he had received them at the hands of his "best friend." The scratches and the "best-friendness" did not seem the least contradictory to him.

Perhaps it was watching these children who fight and embrace, reject and accept almost simultaneously which made many people feel that letting nature take its course was the best way. Now, there are some infections with which nature does exceedingly well on her own, and there are others that call for antibiotics. Some aggressions, too, will call for more than mere observation and patience. For instance, there are children who, for a variety of reasons, get caught by some of their feelings and as these feelings become more and more pervasive, others seem to shrink. Ag-

gression becomes a way of life, and it's a hard way, for it seems to be self-perpetuating. These are the children of whom parents and teachers say, "They strike out for no reason at all, they break and destroy all the time."

#### **Firm ideas of right and wrong**

Children of a very tender age have a remarkable awareness of the mores, and very definite ideas of "good" and "bad," "right" and "wrong." They're the most literal believers in crime and punishment. Occasionally adults make the mistake of asking children what should be done about some disturber of the peace. How they rue the day! Suggested remedies include cutting off his head, putting him in a dark cellar, tying him up, and many more "cures" straight from the Inquisition. These ideas indicate how unlimited is the power that they ascribe to us. Between such a picture of our omnipotence and their own clear ideas of right and wrong, some children caught in angry emotions must feel that there is only one way out: keep on "aggressing" lest you be punished—aggressed against.

Actually, they're right in feeling that their hostility will be returned, for it usually is, if only in disguised form. Adults have feelings of aggression, too, and in relation to children these are frequently aroused by frustrations. Parents who have offered innumerable "chances" and employed every known diversionary tactic would be less than human if they did not become angry when, in spite of all their efforts, there is scene after scene. Teachers likewise get exasperated when Johnny ignores the carefully planned program and materials and spends his time attacking not only material and program but the other children as well. Thus we have angry adults dealing with angry children.

It is useless to ask who "started the fight," and trying to place the blame only sets up too many defenses all round. If one could think of cause instead of blame, it might be easier to make progress. But since the child cannot tell us the causes, we must ask the

adult, though he may not find self-examination too easy, either. Is he, with the best intentions in the world, letting the child down? When he can stand the error no longer does he clamp down on the trial as well? Does he punish the child who is destroying something valuable by resentful non-interference? Would the child be relieved if, in effect, the grownup said "I can't let you do those things," *before* becoming exasperated?

This, of course, is easier said than done—and it isn't even easy to say. The line between helping a child to master something which is getting the better of him and stopping up a necessary outlet is a fine one indeed. We can only try to know the individual child we are dealing with and see this problem in relation to all his other feelings. Actually, the child does an enormous amount to help himself with his feelings and, in doing so, often gives us clues.

#### **What are they spelling out?**

Parents and teachers have often been mortified watching children play house and school. They—the children—are apt to be very strict parents and teachers and they usually have very "bad" children and pupils. Their children never eat, always spill and break, refuse to pay attention. The "parents" and "teachers" spank, scold, stand offenders in the corner, or simply desert them. Since their own parents and teachers have never resorted to these techniques, it cannot be that they are doing unto others as they have been done to.

May it be, then, that they are spelling out to *themselves* what they know, think they know, is expected of them? And is the direct way in which they deal with their charges an indication that they want us to be direct with them—though not quite in the way their actions suggest! Perhaps sometimes, in our efforts not to repress, we have relied too much on diversion. Honest diversion can be valuable and effective in many instances, but diversion that is basically avoidance is like a filibuster—it must go on forever, for at the first break the op-

position will burst forth. We cannot endlessly divert children without damming up so much emotion that an outbreak would be disastrous, or turning the child into a little automaton. Certainly it is important to try to look below the surface for the causes of aggression and ways of trying to handle these causes. But meanwhile, we must not get so lost in looking for the underlying explanation that we do nothing at all about the immediate situation.

Parents often feel that putting the child in a nursery school is a practical step toward dealing with such a problem. Nursery schools are not a panacea for the aggressive child any more than for the withdrawn child, the anxious child, the non-eating child. However, well-planned, well-staffed nursery schools can give these children the opportunity for experiences with accomplishment, satisfaction and stature. (They will also, of course, have experiences with frustration, disappointment, fear and hostility.) The physical set-up can take a good deal of wear and tear, so that experimentation and exploration for the most part can be absorbed.

#### **Avenues of help**

As important for the aggressive child as the paints and clay, blocks and cars, dolls and dishes offered by the nursery school are the other children and the teachers. Very little happens in a nursery school that might be called unusual, and there are very few children whose behavior is unique. Therefore the children act somewhat as mirrors for each other. Thus one child can see that others have tantrums, and that with help from the teacher these pass without dire effects or change in the status quo. Moreover they may get a valuable kind of help from the teachers, not because teachers are more adequate than parents but because the children don't need them in the same way they need their parents, and thus deprivation is not as threatening. Hence some limits may be set which would cause greater tension if introduced at home.

Because of our preoccupation with hos-

tility and aggression we sometimes overlook the pleasant, unaggressive behavior of children. How often we hear comments like "They're getting on so well I have my fingers crossed." Do we unwittingly give children the impression that the getting-on-well periods are unreal interludes—busy work—while the business of life consists of upheavals? Children can enjoy good feelings, too, and perhaps we should try to find more opportunities for their expression.

I recall a five-year-old who, with good reason, was quite angry at the world. His small world had been shattered by family troubles. One day as his teacher was engrossed in the job of mending a broken doll, he quietly enclosed her in a "prison." Before she realized what was happening to her she was captured and her captor stood guard muttering, "You're never going to be freed, you're not going to get any food and then you'll die." She could easily have "escaped," and with another child she would have done just that, rather than support his aggression. But she wanted to see whether this poor little fellow could use other muscles. So she sat in her prison and sang, "Some day my prince will come." She sang and he muttered until suddenly he said, "O.K. I'll be the prince." He was as pleased with the role of prince as of warden and far less blustery.

Parents are understandably concerned when they read the headlines about delinquency and juvenile crime. They ask whether there is any connection between the aggression of young children and the law breaking of the older ones. To this query, again we must repeat that we cannot safely talk of children in general but only of the particular child. We know that there is no need to worry about many of the children who suck their thumbs, but when a child chooses his thumb to the exclusion

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of toys and friends we do need to look for the cause. In the same way, we know that children are going to feel angry and put anger into action, but that in most instances aggression is not all of childhood. When it seems to be all—when a child's impulses are always against something or somebody—then that child calls for careful examination before his behavior becomes chronic and warps his chances for genuine satisfaction.

If we, as adults, need to be reminded that children have the same ideals for themselves as we have—and that these ideals are powerful allies—we have only to listen to them to be encouraged. Watch even the most aggressive, tyrannical youngster listening to the story of Ferdinand. With complete honesty he nods his head, recognizing himself as the peace-loving, flower-smelling bull. It's up to us to help him realize his ideals.

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By Ruth E. Hartley

## Some safety valves in play

When resentful feelings boil up inside a child, one way to help is to offer harmless—and sometimes creative—outlets

Aggression is a necessary quality in our culture. It underlies achievement of any kind—and is doubly important when that achievement must be the result of individual enterprise. Why, then, do we fear it so when it shows itself in childhood? Say "he's an aggressive child" and everyone knows no accolade is intended. Yet when we speak of "an aggressive businessman" we usually indicate approval. We do not ordinarily call the child who masters the jungle gym or the toddler who determinedly climbs to the highest shelf in the storage closet aggressive. Yet in all justice these acts deserve that description as much as negative ones. So it seems we are not clear in our own minds what we mean by the term "aggression," and this confusion is often reflected in our feelings and actions toward vigorous youngsters.

The problem seems to be to preserve in children the positive energies which help them gradually control and use their environment while controlling hostility to-

ward people and destructiveness toward things.

The solution, as with all strong, potentially destructive emotion, seems to be twofold: first to prevent the arousal of intense hostile feelings as far as possible when the child is too young to control them; secondly, to help him find satisfying and harmless outlets for the negative emotions that he does feel.

The latter form of control needs long and persistent training, and may sometimes take a turn that we do not easily recognize as progress. For example, the substitution of spitting or biting and of name-calling for blows is an achievement in the direction of control. How many of us respond to the

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value in these actions? Yet they represent the first form of control of which the child is capable—the substitution of one kind of expression for another, against the object which provoked him.

A second step comes later, when he learns to substitute a different *object* for the one arousing his spleen. Then Tommy will kick his mother's workbasket instead of his mother, or Mary may break the doll her father gave her instead of attacking her father.

#### **Taking it out on substitutes**

When the child is old enough to simmer with recollected hostility, substitute objects for his rage can give him relief. Three-year-old Sally used the bathtub faucets to show how she felt about a particularly intrusive aunt. Smearing soapsuds over both handles, she explained with glee, "There, that's what you get, you stupid old Trudy-aunt, you—now you get soap in this eye, and now you get soap in the other eye, and you cry, and you cry and you cry."

A well-known psychologist uses a device in therapeutic sessions that has been found successful when adapted for the nursery school or the home. This consists of doll-like objects made of soft stuffed heads to which a woman's dress, man's shirt or other garment is attached. The child grasps the sleeves or other parts of the clothing and plays with the "doll" as he wishes. The children's almost universal response to these objects at one nursery school inspired the name "buffets": the baby "buffet" was smacked, the mother and father "buffets" pounded. Nothing seems to equal them as substitute objects for the expression of hostility against members of the family.

As they develop further, children are able to find satisfaction through more indirect methods, and the tools of the workbench offer extremely effective means of venting aggressive feelings. Sawing and hammering are zestful activities which give the child a chance to let off steam, while teaching him constructive techniques for the use of his energies. This transmutation

of negative to positive is the kind of magic one constantly tries for in the process of socialization, and the process does not stop with childhood.

The mother of one young man tells us of the time the family wood lot kept her teenage son on an even keel during a particularly painful family crisis, when his parents were discussing divorce. Telling of it, she says, "He wouldn't say a word when Mark and I had one of our brawls, but he'd get his ax and go out in the woods and bring down tree after tree, until he was calmed down. The slaughter in the wood lot was terrific, but Sandy managed to be pretty sensible about the whole thing, and is still friendly with both of us."

However, we are not recommending a wood lot for every family, since the same outlet will not serve everyone. The child who strikes his thumb more often than the nail will not find hammering a soothing activity. He might prefer to knead clay or smear finger-paints.

#### **The uses of clay, paint, blocks**

At about four and five years, pounding and punishing clay seems to appeal to aggressive children. At four, Jimmy rarely tried to make anything of clay, but was content to knead and pound it with vigor and tear it apart into smaller chunks with glee. Putting it together again (involving more vigorous pounding) seemed to reassure him and to set him free to start the destructive cycle over again.

When children can use clay to make "people," these serve much the same purpose as the "buffets," except that clay figures come apart much more satisfactorily. Since guilt is likely to be a more destructive feeling than aggression, it is important that the child's substitute channels for expressing the latter do not load him down with the former. For children who have not yet clearly separated fantasy from reality, symbolic destruction can be as frightening as the real thing. Hence the importance of the fact that clay objects can be restored.

Blocks and paint are also excellent tools for letting off steam. The "crashing" of blocks that is so wearing to the patient bystander provides a child with innocent release for explosive impulses. And with blocks, as with clay, what has been destroyed can be rebuilt.

The rationale of painting is somewhat different. Some children release the seething forces which they are trying to control by their choice of color; others express themselves in the stabbing, scrubbing strokes they use, as if they would annihilate the paper. With some, the subject matter carries the burden of release—explosive themes, bombings, shootings, knifings. All can, however, obliterate what they have done, if they cannot bear the intention that lies behind the painting. Paint is merciful to the tender conscience.

As the child nears school age, substitute and symbolic modes of expression multiply. Doll-house play, dramatization, play with puppets, making up stories, can all serve the same need. Sham battles, competitive games, wrestling and boxing in fun seem to be more frequently useful for boys than the

more imaginative techniques.

Regarding any of these safety valves, however, we must remember that the moment of crisis is usually not the time to introduce substitute modes of behavior. Jennifer, in the full flush of anger, will ordinarily *not* hit her doll instead of her mother, at command. At such moments, diversion and delay are still our best allies. Faced with a rambunctious two-year-old who showed his resentment of a new brother by lustily kicking his mother's shins, one parent said, "If you feel you have to kick me, dear, please take off your shoes first." Stopped in mid-attack by the reasonableness of the request, the little fury sat down to unlace his shoes, then looked up uncertainly. "Why was I mad?" he asked his waiting mother in bewilderment, and that episode passed off in shared laughter.

If we can play for time, provide indirect means of expression suitable to the age of the child, and keep from over-reacting to every little outburst, we help the child gradually to harness his aggressive forces for positive and vigorous attacks on problems rather than on people.



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# Normal rebellion—or real delinquency?

By William W. Wattenberg

To worried parents this author says: try to understand the why of a defiant action . . . be slow to give it a "bad" label . . . stand by the youngster in trouble

There is such a thing as a real delinquent. He or she is a very unhappy spectacle—tough, wary, and hostile. Anti-social conduct is a persistent, prominent ingredient of his or her behavior. Rarely does a true delinquent specialize in one type of activity; usually his or her bitterness and hate shows up in a wide range of offenses—stealing, fighting, and sex activity. The genuine tough boy or girl is easy to recognize but hard to treat.

However, this article is not going to be another description of delinquency nor is it a diatribe against today's parents. Rather, its aim is to describe normal conduct which often misleads good parents of wholesome youngsters into having nightmares that their sons or daughters are going to wreck their lives.

There are three broad age zones in which mothers and fathers see conduct which looks ominous. Let's look at each in turn.

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Professor Wattenberg, who teaches Educational Psychology at Wayne State University, serves as research consultant to the Youth Bureau of the Detroit Police Department, and has a realistic background for his sound advice.

The first phase appears about the time children are entering school. In some homes, these are turbulent years. Boys especially may develop the art of provoking scenes. An irritated parent may attach nasty-sounding adjectives to this conduct. The child may earn labels like disobedient, touchy, negative, unreasonable, immature.

Many boys and girls at this time have not yet acquired a firm sense of property values nor do they clearly distinguish between fancy and reality. As a consequence, they may take things that belong to other people. When asked about some offense, they respond with a wildly false story. To a mother or father already worried about the child's general pattern of behavior this looks very serious. To the other nasty adjectives they may then add—in their own minds, at least—the torturing one, "delinquent."

There is actually a world of difference between taking and stealing. As late as seven or eight (though usually at younger ages) one finds children who openly take attractive objects. In most cases, there is no attempt at concealment, no effort to hide

what they have done. This sort of conduct shows that parents and other adults concerned with the child have a teaching job to do. We do it by explaining, by making the child return his "loot." There is a point here where punishment can be wisely used to dramatize and reinforce the lessons.

Somewhere along this path of education, the child's newly forming conscience incorporates his parents' disapproval. Now, when he takes something, he feels uneasy, he suffers twinges of guilt. But, at the beginning these may not be strong enough to conquer the attractiveness of a toy, a goody, or money. Yet, the act is met by inner warnings, so that sneakiness is part of its execution. Thus, it has become stealing.

There may be a few more incidents. When the child is detected he or she cries. Usually if parents use these opportunities to voice their disapproval the net effect is to strengthen the conscience to an effective level. Only if this strengthening does not happen will punishment be needed to reinforce the youngster's inner warning system. Should this prove ineffective, as occurs in a small minority of cases, it is a sign that the stealing meets a need arising from inner conflict. It would be well at this point to bring the child to a child guidance clinic or similar resource for an expert opinion and treatment, if required.

#### ***Preadolescent storms***

The second age level in children when parents worry about delinquency is the period of preadolescence, which usually begins about the time the boy or girl starts to grow rapidly. For girls, this is most often about eleven or twelve; for boys, about thirteen or fourteen.

Antagonism to adults and loyalty to gangs is then very typical behavior. Although a few normal youngsters will take the opposite path of being overconscientious and isolating themselves behind books or hobbies, the majority now show a bewildering admiration for the mischief-makers.

At home, there are often stormy scenes.

Bitter campaigns are run by the boys or girls to prove independence in the form of pushing back bedtime, getting out of chores, and being allowed to go to hang-outs. A number will flaunt obscenity by using four-letter, Anglo-Saxon words or telling filthy stories. As a group, the boys or girls may bedevil a neighborhood "crank." A few youngsters may try to prove their courage by shoplifting or other forms of theft.

Parents, quite reasonably, are alarmed by this kind of behavior. Their worry may be intensified by neighbors' complaints. Now and then, the victim of some foray may call the police.

#### ***Few get in serious trouble***

It is important to realize that only a small minority of preadolescents are delinquent in the true sense of the word. The majority of young folks never get in trouble, or if they do, it is a product of poor judgment, group loyalty and a flare-up of antagonism to adults. A few years ago, the author made a study of eleven- and twelve-year-old boys known on complaint by the Youth Bureau of the Detroit Police Department. A follow-up of their records showed that for 80 per cent there was only one contact and that this large proportion of the group had not come to police attention again.

How can parents and other adults recognize the difference between the youngster who will learn a valuable lesson from his first encounter with the law and the delinquent whose police record will grow? The immediate reaction to getting caught tells part of the story. Many relatively normal boys and girls will be very contrite. They are worried, feel very uncomfortable and clearly do not want to repeat the experience. Others hide their anxiety by acting silly. They may seem to take their arrest as a lark. By contrast, the seriously delinquent child is more apt to go in for slick lies or angry outbursts of blaming other people.

Whatever the circumstances surrounding the offense and its detection parents have three tasks to perform: seeing the behavior

in perspective; defending their children; and indicating there are limits on behavior. Let us look at these one at a time.

**First, consider the motives**

First, it is important that behavior be seen in the light of its motivation. The danger is that we may pin adult terms with an ominous sound onto acts which serve simple purposes. Thus, if some boys engage in window-peeping it helps to see them as ineptly trying to satisfy sex curiosities rather than to call them "sex deviates" and conjure up images of rapists. If some girls pick up a few knickknacks from store counters, it is more accurate to regard them as testing their courage than to act as though they were members of a professional shoplifting ring. If a group smears paint on a building they are probably engaging in a thoughtless and impulsive expression of anger rather than in cold-blooded vandalism or sabotage.

All this means that adults have to be alert to recognize the why of actions, to see them in the perspective of preadolescents' need for group approval and for displays of independence from adult domination. Thus when boys engage in scuffling and horseplay, they are acting in a way which expresses friendly self-testing rather than assaultive aggression.

To recognize the difference means just that. It means that we try to see the why of each action, not that we try either to make light of serious behavior or "make a federal case" of trivial actions.

Where it is the considered judgment of parents, or other adults who work with and understand children, that the juvenile misconduct is the result of poor judgment or impulsive defiance, it will be dealt with best by educating the young folks against repetitions. Where the diagnosis is that it is a sign of serious disturbance or a disordered character, one may turn to the machinery of the community for helping children and families—the juvenile court, family service agencies, clinics, and treatment homes.

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**Give help in coping with crisis**

Secondly, whatever the circumstances, when a boy or girl is in trouble, it is essential that he find his parents *helping him to deal with other adults*. The boy or girl in the police station needs mother and father as seldom before. However chagrined or ashamed they may feel, parents should recognize that now is the time to give son or daughter the realization that family bonds have great significance. None of us ever need the feeling of belonging and being accepted half as much when we're right as when we're wrong. To use the shopworn phrase, that's when a fellow needs a friend.

Usually the protection given will take the

form of assuming responsibility for the child. To the police, few things are as reassuring as having parents say they will take son or daughter in hand and will do such things as spend more time with the child, supervise his or her activities more closely, or provide the group with better ways of spending spare time. The adult victim of a juvenile offense often calms down when he finds he can deal with another grownup in terms of getting restitution and knowing that the offenders will be taught a lesson.

Note that these measures all imply a recognition of guilt and responsibility. The parents act as would an effective attorney by helping the boy or girl to make the best possible case for himself and secure the most favorable legitimate settlement. In doing so father or mother says, in effect, "No matter what you have done you are still my child, you are still a member of our family, and you can count on me."

A very different effect is produced when the parent tries to deny the truth of the charges, frighten off accusers, or "fix" the case by employing bribery or pressure. These tactics often have the result of seeming to align the parent with the offense, rather than with the offender. Such overprotection may be interpreted as approval of the delinquency.

**Then—the appropriate penalty**

This brings us to the third item in the formula: parents must indicate that in their eyes certain behavior is bad, that there are limits which they want their children to observe. Once parents have "rescued" the boy or girl from police or irate victim, they are in an emotionally potent position to turn around and state strongly their prohibitions against repetition of similar offenses. Appropriate punishment is in order. It is essential that the penalty be one of short enough duration so that its impact is immediate. Typical penalties may involve limitation of social activities, reducing allowances to help pay for restitution, extra work to obtain money for the same pur-

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pose. After two or three weeks at the outside it is usually well to hold a conference to make sure the youngster has recognized the necessity of keeping himself out of similar situations, and of bestowing parental confidence and a full pardon. The promises most children will make under these circumstances are usually kept. If they cannot be trusted, something is very wrong, and outside help may wisely be used.

Although one dramatic incident will not turn a normal preadolescent into an angel, it usually has a sobering effect. It remains necessary to help the child learn less dangerous ways of continuing to do what he has to do to grow up—obtain freedom from childish dependence on parents, and gain approval from his own age mates. Parents can assist by recognizing that some rebellions and gang loyalty are still legitimate behavior, by showing approval or at least tolerance for some shenanigans, and confining stern enforcement of limits to clearly delinquent activities such as stealing, hurtful assault, destruction of property, and dangerous sex activities. It is harmful to enlarge this list to include bans on faddish clothing, haircuts, popular modes of dancing, use of lipstick or other non-delinquent signs of youth's wanting to be like the rest of the crowd.

Although parents are upset by the antics of preadolescents, the peak age for genuine delinquency in the United States is at 15 or 16. A large proportion occurs in gangs. While delinquency tends to be concentrated in the economically poor areas of large cities, no community or neighborhood is free. Some forms, notably auto theft, are more frequent in suburbs and "good" sections of large communities.

#### ***Trying themselves out***

As a general rule, the delinquencies of boys involve theft and gang fighting. At this age, gangs fight other gangs, rather than bedeviling adults, as in preadolescence. The genuinely delinquent boy is likely by now to have cut himself off from his home, which he uses mainly as a refuel-

ing station and bedroom. For girls, delinquency is more apt to be one element in a mother-daughter feud. To express her independence and as an "I'll show them" strategy, the girl will run away, get involved in sex activity, or join in shoplifting.

As at the earlier ages, parents must be able to see adolescent conduct in perspective, and not act as though children were delinquent when they are engaging in normal behavior. More than 90 per cent of all youth pass through adolescence without serious trouble.

Take this matter of gangs, for instance. Practically all adolescents become members of some gang. However, the vast majority of gangs are fun-seeking aggregations which enable the boys to be sure of companions in games and the girls to have parties.

Actually, the typical activity of the normal gang is a desultory kind of loafing in which there is a slow pace of banter, strolling, and just sitting. Asked what they have done of an evening, a boy or girl will answer, "Nothing," or "We just fussed around." To the suspicious parent, this may sound like an evasive cover-up for secret and lurid doings.

Go to a community center or a drug store where teen-agers congregate. What will you see? A slightly disorganized, milling crowd! In buildings devoted to supervised recreation, the paid workers often will be making relatively fruitless efforts to get the young folks "into the program." On the fringes of the crowd may be a few excitement-hungry boys or girls who will exploit a chance to cause trouble. However, the vast majority are quite content to sit or stand and talk.

Many parents realize today how much acceptance as a member of the group means to most adolescents, yet they may be alarmed or annoyed by some of the fads that symbolize "belonging" to the young person. From time to time a particular costume, haircut or mannerism may evoke in adults memories of criminal toughs. However, even if boys do go in for dark leather



jackets and peaked caps that make them look vaguely like Nazi storm troopers it does not necessarily mean that they will feel or act that way.

When parents try to criticize or correct such actions or protest the clothing, they are usually met with almost blind resistance. "I can't do a thing with him (or her)," is the cry. But this is not delinquency!

Perhaps the greatest antidote to true delinquency at this age is for adults to help the groups do what they want to do, with grown-up supervision. For instance, in one community there was a hell-raising clique within the high school known as "the hoods." The boys affected a tough appearance; the girls encouraged wild parties. Noting that the boys had "hot rods," a thoughtful high school principal persuaded a large garage-owner to let the boys use his place evenings to work on their cars. The mechanics were told to ignore swearing, rough costumes, or crude talk with girls. They concentrated on friendly help with the appearance and power of the cars. Pleased with this acceptance of their own surface values, the boys took pride in being skillful, mature drivers. The surface of toughness was untouched; the behavior it covered became fundamentally good.

It is essential for adults to penetrate be-

neath the surface and concentrate on basic behavior. Now and then, some self-styled expert or other authority gets trapped into dealing with non-essentials. The argument may go something like this: The boys involved in gang fighting had ducktail haircuts. Ergo, all boys with ducktail haircuts are delinquents. So, the duck-tail haircuts are the cause of delinquency. The bright solution for delinquency is to shave their heads.

Stated thus bluntly, it is easy to see how silly are such campaigns. Yet, year after year newspapers will report glaring instances of such attacks on youth by judges, police, and school officials. Parents allow themselves to be misled in similar fashion. We must be on guard against such futile and harmful reactions. Do not assume a boy or girl is delinquent unless his or her behavior actually involves stealing, destruction of property, dangerous fighting, or promiscuity.

If you have given your child some guidance in his growing up, along with a sympathetic understanding of the tough spots, the chances are that you have helped him build firm standards which may be buffeted, but won't be washed away, in the turmoil of adolescence. Show confidence in him at this time. Despite troubling appearances, he deserves it.

## Group exploration — and discovery

*The following excerpt from a parent discussion group is offered as an interesting—almost dramatic—illustration of the kind of exploration and discovery that may happen as the participants in such a group get to know each other and learn to work together. It is taken from a report of the third meeting in a series of 10 sessions for parents of children three to six years of age. The group was made up of 15 mothers and fathers whose children attended a nursery school in a large city; this material is pre-*

*sented with the knowledge and approval of both the parents and the school. All names have been changed, however, to insure the privacy of the group members.*

This group had chosen to talk about "sibling rivalry," a term they themselves introduced, and then related to their own family experiences.

Mr. Gordon said that Sally, their oldest child, aged six, never seemed to be competitive with Amy (who is a year younger

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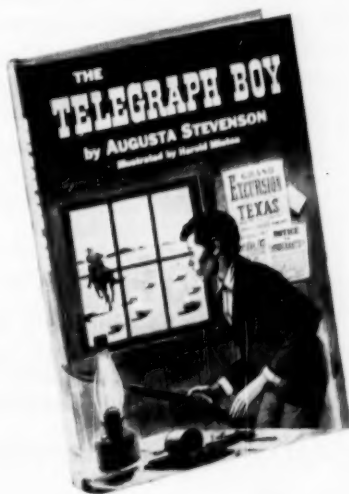
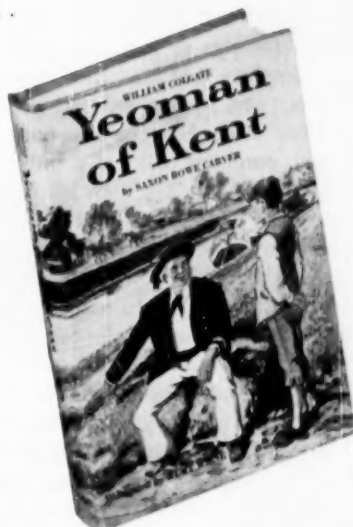
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than she) and that she was very motherly toward both Amy and her baby brother. He said that he and his wife had given Sally a great deal of attention during her first year and that she was the most "rocked" baby he knew of. Perhaps, he thought, this was why she was so secure.

But it was soon brought out that even thoughtful and loving care for the older child's feelings at this time might not be the complete solution. Mrs. Madden said that her son, Steve, aged five, had changed at two, when Maggie was born, from a happy, outgoing child to a biting, hating, bitter little boy. Yet both his parents had done their best to see that he should not feel in any way displaced by the new baby. Indeed, they had practically ignored the baby in their efforts to reassure Steve, but this had not helped at all. Steve had often threatened to hurt the baby and even now, three years later, was resentful of any attention shown her by his parents.

Mrs. Keane said that very much the same thing had happened with her two sons, age six and four. Although she and Mr. Keane had also tried to make sure that Bob did not feel left out in any way when the baby was born, he continued to express intense feeling toward Jim, hitting and teasing him and generally making his life miserable, to

the parents' great distress.

Mrs. James, who has two daughters, said, "Jane, our older girl, was mildly resentful for a while, but this has worked out quite comfortably now." Mr. and Mrs. Mills described a similarly mild and brief reaction in their older child when a second daughter was born.

What was the cause of these intense feelings in some of the older children? The fact that there was only a year between the older and younger children was suggested as having some possible bearing on the matter, but the Gordons pointed out that their companionable little daughters were only a year apart, too. Mr. Madden then suggested that maybe it was the fact that the older children of the Gordons, the Mills and the James were girls that accounted for the easier solution of the problem, while trouble seemed more likely to arise when the first child was a boy. The group, however, felt that this was not the whole answer.

Mrs. Keane said with some feeling that she felt it had been a mistake for her and her husband to focus so much on the older child. Their open and expressed acceptance of the new baby, she thought, might have given Bobbie the feeling that Jim was a real member of the family and entitled

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to respect and love, and this would have been much better for them all.

After some further discussion, the leader then linked this point with material from an earlier session which had brought out the good results achieved with children when parents had firm convictions about what they were doing. There was a lull in the discussion as the group seemed to be thinking this over. Then Mr. Keane said slowly, as though feeling his way, "This may sound very silly, but I suddenly find myself wondering how many of us whose kids have severe problems about rivalry are older children ourselves? Both my wife and I are."

For a moment there was silence, followed by murmurings in the group, as if they were checking with one another. Mrs. Madden was the first to speak out. Quietly, but intently, she said that she and her husband were both older children; she recalled vividly her own strong feelings when her younger brother was born. At this point Mr. Mills made the interesting comment that he and his wife and Mrs. James—the ones who had had less difficulty with their older children—were all only children. Mrs. James added that she had always been unhappy about not having a brother or sister and that her (and her husband's) only thought had been to have a second child so that their first would not be alone.

Mr. Keane, who had listened thoughtfully throughout this interchange, said that perhaps this showed that the early feelings of parents about their own brothers and sisters persisted strongly enough to be an influence in their children's lives and actions.

The leader reinforced this idea and commented that this discussion had pointed up very clearly the fact that people do seem to bring their whole backgrounds and former family relationships, good and bad, to the job of being parents, and that it was helpful occasionally to look at it in this way. By their intent and yet satisfied manner, the group seemed to agree that they had achieved a step toward better understanding of themselves and their children.

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## Adult books for young readers

One fine day the young reader abandons his latest "juvenile" book to browse through the best-seller on the coffee table. He feels a new need to leave the safe, well-edited world of "young" books for the challenging realities of adult reading. Like the process of shifting from childhood to maturity called adolescence, of which this is a symptom, the transition to "grown-up" books has moments of strain.

True, some mature young readers (more often girls than boys) take an effortless step into the world of adult reading, drawing from it the new wisdom which they crave and discarding easily what they cannot absorb. A great number, however, are often discouraged or disappointed by their random excursions into books which have piqued their curiosity but fail to hold their interest. In spite of advanced reading ability, these young people are handicapped by the natural limits of their general information, capacity for abstract thinking, and experience.

The newly-experimental teen-ager need not be left in a no-man's land between the familiar world of outgrown "young books" and the new reading horizons which beckon. Parents, re-appraising their own book collections, will be eager to suggest some old favorites which will give new pleasure to their children. Many of these will be found, too, on the school's suggested—sometimes "required"—reading lists. But since teen-agers enjoy being in the swim, they

naturally like current books. How shall we help them choose those books which will widen their horizons within the framework of the values they understand?

As we scan our current booklists from the teen-ager's point of view, we find an abundance of books—novels, biographies, essays, humor, poetry—which seem especially suited to their interests. Certain novels, for instance, seem to speak quite directly to the thoughts and emotions of younger readers. *Greenwillow*, by B. J. Chute (Dutton \$3.50) is a warm and imaginative fantasy that weaves its spell with earthy humor as well as poetic charm. The compelling romantic adventure in *The Scapegoat* (Doubleday \$3.95) will ensnare almost any young girl in its urgent web. New Mexico a hundred years ago is the setting of *The Lady* by Conrad Richter (Knopf \$3.00), the superbly-told story of a woman of bold spirit, charm, and position who emerges triumphant from an unequal struggle with a ruthless schemer. In a lower key, *The Fountain Overflows* by Rebecca West (Viking \$5.00) is a sentimental journey into the life of an unconventional English family with two gifted musical daughters. Its quiet, reflective mood will appeal to certain thoughtful older girls. On the other hand, John P. Marquand's *Stopover: Tokyo* (Little, Brown \$3.95), a suspense story of post-war Japan in which the amazing Mr. Moto continues his adventures, will have universal appeal. *The Guns of Navarone*,

by Alistair MacLean (Doubleday \$3.95), is the taut story of five men chosen during World War II to silence strategic German guns high on an unapproachable cliff, and in the same vein of adventure, *The Deep Range*, by Arthur C. Clarke (Harcourt, Brace \$3.95), transports us ahead a hundred years to the new worlds of the deep sea in a fresh approach to science-fiction. For the more mature reader, there is skillful historical entertainment in *The Brain-tree Mission*, by John Wyckoff (Macmillan \$3.50), which poses the question of what might have happened to the colonies had John Adams been persuaded to become an English peer. And many young people—especially the dog lovers among them—will enjoy *The Hunting Horn*, by Paul Annixter (Hill and Wang \$3.00), a rather special collection of unusual dog stories.

Adolescents particularly relish humorous books. But books which adults chuckle over are often based on the wry appreciation of bitter-sweet experience which doesn't seem funny to teen-agers. Nevertheless, there are several humorists who seem to have a special empathy with young people, among them James Thurber and Ogden Nash. Happily, there are two recent books by Thurber. His latest is a delightful bit of wise whimsy called *The Wonderful O* (Simon and Schuster \$3.50). Equally delectable is his *Further Fables for Our Times* (Simon and Schuster \$3.50). Ogden Nash's new anthology of very gay verse, *You Can't Get There From Here* (Little, Brown \$3.75) is sure to amuse almost everybody. The cartoonist Ted Keys has written a bright little satire, with his inimitable cartoons as illustrations, called *Ted Keys' Phyllis* (Dutton \$1.95), a merry tale of a sparrow named Phyllis who wins a world championship for the Philadelphia Phillies by building her nest in the left field of their ball park.

Three inspiring true stories are sure to touch young readers and deepen their understanding. The first is Marian Anderson's autobiography, *My Lord, What a Morning* (Viking \$5.00), in which one of the great

singers of our time writes with simplicity and restraint of her life and struggles as an artist and as a Negro. The second is *The Nun's Story* by Kathryn Hulme (Little, Brown \$4.00), the inspiring account of a remarkable woman's dedicated service to humanity and to God against the background of her unsuccessful spiritual struggle to maintain the unquestioning obedience required of a nun. And third, Alan Marshall, in *I Can Jump Puddles* (World \$3.50), recaptures his happy boyhood in the colorful bush country of Australia where with gay determination he conquered the handicap of his polio-paralyzed legs.

Biographies of the great and near great of history, rooted in truth, acquaint young people with the real problem of life, past and present. Ruth Painter Randall, author of the earlier *Mary Lincoln: The Biography of a Marriage* and *Lincoln's Sons*, has turned her attention to *The Courtship of Mr. Lincoln* (Little, Brown \$3.75) which she describes with spirit and literary grace. For the serious reader, *Queen of France* by André Castelot (Harpers \$5.00) is a distinguished biography which combines good reading and fine scholarship in the dramatic narrative of Marie Antoinette's life and times. John F. Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Profiles in Courage* (Harpers \$3.50, also available in a paper-bound edition at 35 cents) provides for the older reader the stirring and inspirational example of some outstanding Americans who in decisive moments in history had the courage to hold their unpopular convictions in the face of calumny and defeat.

Three humorous, intimate and discursive books, partly autobiographical and thoroughly delightful, are Jessamyn West's *To See The Dream* (Harcourt, Brace \$3.95), Gerald Durrell's *My Family and Other Animals* (Viking \$3.95), and Mary Chubb's *City in the Sand* (Crowell \$3.95). In the first, Jessamyn West, author of *Cress Delectant* and *The Friendly Persuasion*, shares with us her California Journals kept while she worked with Hollywood's William

Wyler in adapting *The Friendly Persuasion* for the screen. With humor, poetry and wisdom, she mingles glimpses of her past and perceptive thoughts on life with the entertaining complications of adapting a book for the movies. Gerald Durrell, a zoologist by profession, writes with high good humor of five years spent with his unusual family on Corfu, and happily combines nature lore with off-beat sophisticated laughter. In the same light-hearted manner Mary Chubb shares with us her adventures as secretary to an archaeological expedition in Mesopotamia.

True accounts of adventure and exploration nourish dreams of glory. Young boys will particularly enjoy Don Whitehead's definitive *The FBI Story* (Random House \$4.95) and William Morgan's *The O.S.S. and I* (Norton \$3.75), the lively account of a psychologist who was trained as a spy and a saboteur during World War II and his adventures with the French Underground. *Operation Deep Freeze* (Harcourt \$5.00), Rear Admiral George Dufek's own account of the most extensive Polar expedition in history, reveals the drama and hazards of this excursion into the unknown. Less edifying, James Michener's and A. Grove Day's *Rascals in Paradise* (Random House \$4.75) subtitled "*True Tales of Adventures in the South Pacific*" tells the authentic stories of ten colorful personalities who over the years sought profit and pleasure in the Pacific Islands with often blood-curdling ferocity.

Realism of another sort reminds us with terse eloquence of the international dangers which plague today's world. Walter Lord recreates the attack on Pearl Harbor in *Day of Infamy* (Holt \$3.95), and James Michener in *The Bridge at Andau* (Random House \$3.50) contributes with sober restraint his devastating on-the-spot report of the recent Hungarian uprising against Communism whose horrors and heart-break—only too authentic—are not for the squeamish. Readers interested in world affairs will profit, too, from David Schoenbrun's *As France Goes* (Harpers \$5.00), an

illuminating and comprehensive study of contemporary France which is at the same time highly readable.

Each year brings a new crop of books that interpret science for the uninitiated layman. One current "tour de force" in translating technological mysteries deserves special mention: *Let ERMA Do It* by David O. Woodbury (Harcourt, Brace \$5.00) skillfully reduces the wonders of automation to intelligible terms with the help of clear diagrams. (ERMA stands for Electronic Recording Machine—Accounting.)

Young poetry enthusiasts will enjoy two unusual recent anthologies, Helen Plotz' *Untune the Sky* (Crowell \$3.50), a distinguished collection of poems written about music and the dance, fine companion to her earlier anthology, *Imagination's Other Place*, and *This Way, Delight* (Pantheon \$3.50), poems skillfully selected by Herbert Reade. The whole family will browse happily through the pages of *The Ladies' Home Journal Treasury* (Simon and Schuster \$7.50) in which John Mason Brown has gathered the best stories, articles and poetry to appear in *The Ladies' Home Journal* in the last 75 years. Here is a rich variety of sketches, biography, verse, essays both light and serious, and fiction, and a roster of famous authors from Kipling and Hardy to Pearl Buck and Auden.

A word of caution: thoughtful adult guidance (not censorship) through the maze of current literature is welcomed by most young readers, though some will prefer to find their own way. Many good teen-age reading lists are available, outstanding among them an excellent one revised annually by the New York Public Library called "Books for the Teen-Age." Many libraries have arranged special "Young Adult" sections where adult books, both old and new, are gathered for their choosing, and where it is taken for granted the choice must be their own.

ARLETTE P. BRAUER

for the Children's Book Committee





## Parent's Questions

These questions are selected and discussed  
by the Child Study Association  
staff, and the answers written by its various members

### War stories for youngsters

*Many of the new books for young people are glamorizing the heroes and thrilling exploits of World War II. I can't help wondering what effect such reading may have on the attitudes of our youth toward war as adventure and personal glory, rather than as horror, devastation and anguish.*

MRS. C. D.

Young people—especially boys—have always been fascinated by tales of fighting. It's hard to know whether they are drawn to such stories because of their own feelings of aggression which find little outlet in today's living, or whether one must just accept it as characteristic of mankind that "everybody loves a good fight." There seems to be a need in many youngsters for a brush with danger which they may experience vicariously through the deeds of a warrior hero, whether it be Homer or General Patton. There's no harm in that, especially if we remember, as we must, that these young people are facing the reality of military service in their not too distant future. However much we may have learned to abhor war, our boys know they are soon to be trained in soldiering.

World War II is part of our history, along with its heroism and its anguish. The important thing is that young people shall know *both* these aspects of it. We can see to this in several ways. We can place in their hands those stories in which war is shown as no pink tea. There are excellent

books which, with due tribute to personal courage and heroism, also paint a pretty stark picture of the grim realities of modern warfare. (Perhaps we should remind writers and publishers to give their war books this balanced quality.) But there are also books which should be strong antidotes to any illusions about the glory of war. These are the books that picture the aftermath of war: stories of people and families living under the cruel dislocations of warfare, or left with the broken fragments of their lives to rebuild. Let's see that our children find these books, too: such powerful stories as *The Level Land* and *Return to the Level Land* by Dola de Jong, *The Twenty and Ten* by Claire Huchet Bishop, *The House of Sixty Fathers* by Meindert de Jong, to mention only a few. Youngsters who love "a good fight" can be helped to discover that there are other kinds of fighting, too: the literature for young people abounds in stories of the courage and heroism of such fighters for humanity as Albert Schweitzer, Harriet Tubman, Roger Williams, Peter Zenger, and many others.

Our children's attitudes are formed not by their reading alone but by what they know we think and feel. If our own attitudes toward war are strong and deeply felt we will surely communicate to our children the urgency of finding more civilized ways to resolve international problems, better ways of fighting for the things we believe in.

## Why some children steal

*My nine-year-old brought home a bottle of nail polish and some white buttons the other afternoon which she rather shamefacedly admitted she had picked up from the "dime store" counter without paying for them. She and three of her friends seem to have had quite a time of it, seeing what each of them could get away with. She has never done this before, and I am so concerned, with all the talk about juvenile delinquency, that she may be getting into bad ways too.*

MRS. S. F.

It is naturally very upsetting to find a usually law-abiding child suddenly behaving in this way, but many children do just this sort of minor pilfering at one time or other for reasons that are not always clear. Occasionally they will take something they want very much, so much that they can't resist the temptation. More often, however, they seem to come away with objects that have little value to them, so one must infer that they take them for reasons other than just the wish to possess them. Then what they have done is important for its symbolic rather than its real meaning. Sometimes, as with your girl, children do this as part of an exciting group enterprise, egging each other on to see how far they can go. Their behavior takes on a tone of defiance of authority, a wish to flaunt grownups and grownup rules that is not at all unusual in the middle school years when boys and girls are beginning to test out their own competence and independence. Often, too, this happens if a child is upset about something. Then his taking things may be an indirect means of getting back at the world in a way he is probably quite unaware of, himself.

It is interesting that this kind of aggressive act is so often directed toward material things. Is this because, in our civilization, such stress is generally put on ownership of all kinds of objects? Is it perhaps that so few children today have the oppor-

tunity of creating things with their own hands that they have only a vague understanding of what they are worth? And also that since they can't make them, they either have to buy or take them? These and many other ideas inherent in the culture in which we live seem to pervade the atmosphere behind and around the specific standards that are set in individual families.

Whether the specific act of stealing is serious or not has to be worked out in each situation. If a child does this kind of thing repeatedly and at the same time shows other strong signs of defiant, hostile behavior, either directly or evasively, then it is important that the situation be looked into thoroughly, with professional help.

If it happens rarely, as in your girl's case, it is probably a random, impulsive performance. It does not at all mean that your child is headed for a career of crime, but is a sign that she is struggling toward something new and different. Talk it over with her as quietly and sympathetically as you can. Help her to see what your standards are (she probably knows them anyway, but it is important that you state them again) and see if there aren't better ways of getting whatever satisfaction she may be looking for. Perhaps she needs more chance to do things on her own, as well as suggestions for more purposeful activity with her group.

But remember that such episodes do occur occasionally even with adolescents. Many of us adults probably did similar things once in a while when we were young. Only we tend to push the memory of them away because we don't like to think that we ever could have done something so socially unacceptable.

## The small child vs. the gang

*Recently in the playground, a group of ten- and eleven-year-olds rushed at my five-year-old, and one of them grabbed his skates and ran. I cornered him and demanded the skates back. The boy, a ten-year-old who goes to my child's school,*



*screamed "try to get them," and only dropped them after he had kicked me violently. I did not hit back, though perhaps I should have. Later, I phoned his mother and she, in a rage at her child, urged me to go ahead and beat him up whenever I saw fit. What can I do to see that this does not happen again?*

MRS. R. L. P.

Your first obligation is certainly to your own child. A five-year-old can't be expected to stand up and fight back when the others are so much bigger. Even if he had been their age and size, he probably could not have defended himself successfully when taken by surprise by a gang of kids who feel strength in numbers and whose aggressiveness is rampant.

Seeing a mother hotly defend his rights is a good experience for a five-year-old. Children feel protected and cared for when their parents are the kind of people who can stand up for them when necessary. But after the emergency is past, your child and his friends need a few hints on how to keep away from danger and how to protect their property. Often, for example, an unsuspecting child will "lend" something to a newcomer who promptly makes off with it. Make it clear, too, that you don't admire the kind of "bravery" shown by the older boys. As to what to do about the aggressive child himself, your conversation with his mother gives you a clue to a bit of the background that has led up to this behavior. No mother invites a comparative stranger to beat up her child unless she herself is at her wit's end.

Perhaps this sort of aggressiveness is not really deeply ingrained in this child and with sympathetic redirection he could be a normal, likeable youngster. But there's no way of predicting without knowing him at closer range. The boy's mother might welcome a suggestion from you that she talk with his teacher or look for help from a social agency. If she continues to be so helpless in controlling his behavior, and does not respond to any suggestions about it,

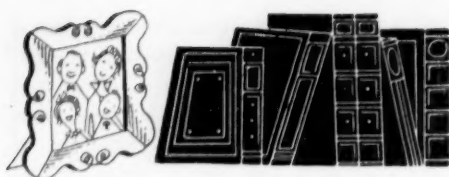
and if your child or others are still molested by gangs, you may want to talk to the police. Frequently, delinquency does start with unmanageable aggressiveness, truancy, stealing—against a background of disorganization and bad relationships at home.

If your neighborhood is not sufficiently patrolled, you might get a citizen's group of some kind to see if more officers can be assigned. Though even adequate policing is not a "cure" that gets at the roots of the trouble, crime and juvenile delinquency can often be held in check this way. The term "delinquency" is a very general one covering many different offenses by widely differing types of youngsters. It is a symptom of social breakdown for which there is no quick and easy solution. Simply labeling a child "delinquent" does not tell you much about what he is like or how to change him. Each must be considered as an individual. But when people like yourself want to "do something" about it, they can give active support to whatever agencies that work to strengthen families in distress. In many cities and rural areas, too, there are also agencies directed specifically toward this problem.

### UNICEF activities

- *Trick or Treat for UNICEF*, the annual Halloween program of the United Nations Children's Fund, has turned a night of soapy windows and wilder pranks into a meaningful event for millions of children throughout the world. Three-quarters of a million dollars—for food, milk, and drugs—were collected in pennies, dimes and nickels in last year's campaign. The 1957 planning kit, containing sufficient material for a group of 25, is available for \$1.00 from the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, United Nations, New York.

- *Striking design and handsome color mark* the fine, new collection of drawings contributed to UNICEF's 1957 Greeting Card Fund by Ludwig Bemelmans, Hans Erni, Mai-Thu and Gladys Rockmore Davis. Every card sold helps UNICEF's world-wide program for protecting unfortunate children from hunger and disease. Available with or without holiday greetings, the cards come in boxes of ten at \$1.25 per box. Imprints accepted only until December 1. Write UNICEF Greeting Card Fund, United Nations, New York.



## Book reviews

### **The Family and Mental Illness**

By Samuel Southard

Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957.  
\$1.50

### **Emotional Illness: How Families Can Help**

By Karl R. Beutner, M.D. and Nathan G. Hale, Jr.

New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1957. \$2.75

### **Mental Illness: A Guide for the Family**

By Edith M. Stern

New York: Harper and Brothers, Third Edition Revised, 1957. \$2.50

Very little has been written in laymen's terms on one of the most fundamental aspects of emotional illness: its impact and effect upon the family.

*The Family and Mental Illness* is written by a minister who is Professor of Pastoral Care, Institute of Religion at Texas Medical Center. It is addressed to physicians, pastors, and parishioners who must undergo severe crises and strains when someone in the family is emotionally ill.

Dr. Southard points out that after the family has overcome the initial shock of realizing that one of its members needs hospitalization or home care (and the book includes help on detection of symptoms), they must face the next problem of adjusting to the loss of emotional support from the sick person. Duties, responsibilities and routines often have to be shifted. Children, parents, husbands and wives may feel guilty, resentful, helpless, and isolated from the community.

How balance can be maintained during

such stress, Dr. Southard states, will depend largely upon "the strength or weakness of family ties under normal conditions. In a strong family, despite the disruptive strain of an emotional disorder, they may all work together as they have in other troubles." Nevertheless, he encourages the family to seek professional guidance during this period, for themselves as well as the patient. He offers information on the sources of such qualified assistance, and on various types of psychiatric treatment.

Dr. Southard praises the increasing alliance between psychiatry and religion, discusses the value of religion in the treatment of the patient, and urges wider training of the clergy in pastoral psychology.

Although this handbook is directed mainly to the Protestant family, its basic mental hygiene principles should make it acceptable and meaningful to people of all faiths.

In *Emotional Illness: How Families Can Help*, the combined talents of a psychiatrist and writer are put to use in taking a further look into the feelings and reactions of both the emotionally disturbed patient and his family.

Without using technical language or attempting to classify the different forms of emotional disturbance, these authors do an excellent job of presenting some of the psychological background and precipitating factors in emotional breakdown. "The difference," they say, "between being emotionally healthy or sick remains largely a matter of degree." They believe that in learning how to understand the feelings, irrational behavior and demands of their relative, as well as to face their own conflicting emotions towards him, the family may be able to form a workable and helpful relationship with the sick person.

The book aims to lessen the family's feeling of guilt for their relative's illness, and shows them instead ways in which they can assume some responsibility towards his recovery.

Those who worry about the daily life of a hospitalized relative will find much to reassure them in Edith Stern's new and re-

vised edition of *Mental Illness: A Guide for the Family*. She describes what happens to the patient in a modern mental hospital from the time of admission through care, treatment and discharge, and answers many questions about hospital procedures, personnel, program, visits, the family's part in cooperating with the hospital, and, later, in helping their relative with his difficult readjustment to home and community life.

There is one facet of the problem, however, which has not been considered in any of these books: how to explain emotional illness in the family to a child. Surely many parents must have been perplexed when faced with such questions as "Why does Johnny say Daddy is crazy?" or "What have I done to make Mommy cry so much?" Additional material, including concrete suggestions for parents, would be a valuable contribution to the literature on emotional disturbance.

In general, these little handbooks should be a source of guidance and support for the many families (one out of five, according to Beutner and Hale) affected by this devastating form of illness. HELENE S. ARNSTEIN

*for the Book Review Committee*

**Meeting Children's Emotional Needs: A Guide for Teachers.**

By Katherine D'Evelyn.

New York: Prentice Hall. 1957. \$3.75

There is much evidence to support this author's contention that we need to make use of our schools as a resource for the early detection of emotional problems. We know there is much that can be done to prevent small problems in small children from turning into real neurotic difficulties in later life. Unfortunately, this is not a simple process and should not be made to appear so.

Every teacher and parent would benefit from reading Part I of this book, entitled, "The Classroom and Mental Health." In this section, the author has skillfully condensed a great deal of material on the

child's emotional needs, the importance of creative activity for individual development and the fostering of good interpersonal relationships. It would, indeed, be highly beneficial for mental health generally, if all teachers were trained to recognize a child's need for help and knew where to turn for it. However, in the opinion of this reader, any book on the topic that is designed for indiscriminate circulation and unsupervised use should stop at this point.

Miss D'Evelyn has included in the text a persistent warning against attempts by the teacher to apply therapy, but then interprets troublesome behavior in over-simplified terms of cause and effect which are misleading to the layman. Though no doubt the author, herself, is well aware of the multiplicity and intricacy of the factors influencing behavior, she tends to see children's emotional problems stemming almost exclusively from the mother-child relationship. Aside from the fact that this is an additional oversimplification, one may question the wisdom of encouraging teachers to make diagnoses and judgments on parents within this framework.

These problems could have been avoided in an otherwise excellent book, had the author confined herself to an exposition of how to recognize certain children's need for professional help and where to go for it when it is indicated.

JEAN REX

*for the Book Review Committee*

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# New books about parenthood and family life

## Books for parents

**CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE: A Psychology of the Growing Person.** By L. Joseph Stone and Joseph Church. Random House, 1957. 456 pp. \$6.50. This is an outstanding book, written by two members of the Vassar College Department of Child Study. It is evident that they have not only studied but also have lived with and enjoyed children. Their descriptions of how children grow, learn, feel, think and react, give a living picture of the dynamic process of growth toward maturity—and there is a fine statement of what maturity really is. A distinguished addition to the literature of child development.

**THE COMPLETE BOOK OF CHILDREN'S PLAY.** By Ruth E. Hartley and Robert M. Goldenson. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1957. 462 pp. \$5.00. A description of children and their play from birth to adolescence showing how their development affects their interests and skills and how appropriate play at each age level can stimulate their development. Chapters on hobbies, convalescent activities, pets, travel games, television etc. are sound and helpful. So, too, are the lists of books, records, and pictures. Though classifications by age of children's interests and characteristics are at times too rigid, with insufficient discussion of individual variations and temperaments, the book is a nice balance of psychological and practical information.

**EXPECTANT MOTHERHOOD.** By Nicholson J. Eastman, M.D. Little Brown & Co. Revised edition, 1957. 198 pp. \$1.75. A practical handbook which gives a simple, clear picture of the physical aspects of pregnancy, labor, delivery and the post-partum period. This revised edition of a little book that has already been widely used incorporates the principal advances in maternity care of the last decade.

**PREGNANCY AND BIRTH: A Book for Expectant Parents.** By Alan F. Guttmacher, M.D. The Viking Press, 1957. 335 pp. \$4.50. A wonderfully informative book on the physiological and medical aspects of pregnancy from conception and before, in terms of modern obstetrical knowledge and procedure. Natural child birth, "rooming in," and breastfeeding are discussed, but only briefly; the author acknowledges their merits, though somewhat half-heartedly. Considerable space is devoted to pathology of var-

*Selected by the CSAA Book Review Committee,  
Mary W. Colley, Acting Chairman*

ious kinds, which for some parents may increase the fears that are normally present during this period, but finally one is left with the feeling that the skilled physician has all eventualities under control.

**RETARDED CHILDREN CAN BE HELPED.** By Cornell Calpa and Maya Pines. Channel Press, Inc., 1957. 159 pp. \$5.00. Parents of retarded children will welcome this volume describing the diagnostic clinics and other educational resources now available for these children. Emphasis is on the responsibility of all of us for the welfare and development of the retarded. Here, in picture and text, is encouragement and advice for all who wish to promote citizen action on this important matter in their own communities.

**WHY CAN'T WE HAVE A BABY?** By James Henry Ferguson, M.D. Almat Publishing Corp. (Pyramid Books), 1957. 127 pp. \$.35. Very simply written, forthright, yet friendly and sympathetic, this small paper-bound volume is a real find for any childless couple who want children. It explains the many factors involved in conception or lack of conception and shows how through understanding and medical treatment the problem of sterility can often be solved.

**YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN.** Edited by Eugene S. Geissler. Fides Publishers Assn., 1956. 155 pp. \$2.95. A collection of articles on Catholic family life by five mothers, two fathers, and a priest. It begins with the birth of a baby and treats of childhood and adolescence. The many questions besetting parents through the children's growing years are treated with humor and good sense, and there is a spirit of cooperation and understanding between the members of the family which is contagious. For these authors the value of religious practice in the daily family routine is paramount.

**YOUR CHILD'S TEETH: A Guide for Parents.** By Edgar S. Bacon, D.D.S. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1957. 124 pp. \$2.50. Information for parents on how children's teeth develop and the importance of first teeth to the best development of a child's facial contours and speech in later years. Helpful advice too on preparing a child for his first visit to the dentist. Sound information on fluoridations, fluoride treatments, and ways of preventing malocclusion (bad bite) make this a valuable book on a subject neglected by busy pediatricians.

**YOUR FAMILY WITHOUT YOU.** By N. R. Caine. Crown Publishers, Inc., 1957. 222 pp. \$3.95. The author urges that the time to pro-

vide for and ensure the financial welfare of the family is now. While stressing the need to consult a lawyer for all important steps, he also alerts the reader to what to watch for in connection with wills, trusts, insurance, and how to avoid expensive mistakes. An important subject heretofore neglected in books for the family.

**Books for those who work with families and children**

**PATTERNS OF CHILD REARING.** By Robert R. Sears, Eleanor E. Maccoby, Harry Levin. Row, Peterson and Company, 1957. 549 pp. \$5.25. A report of a competent study of how 379 American mothers brought up their children from birth to kindergarten age, based on their replies to questions regarding their attitudes toward pregnancy, feeding techniques, ways of training, reward, and punishment. In addition, the mothers were asked to estimate the effects of these attitudes on their children. Findings were summarized and some interesting conclusions drawn, particularly on the subjects of weaning, toilet training, and punishment.

**Books on special subjects**

**EMOTIONAL ILLNESS: How families can help.**

By Karl R. Beutner, M.D. and Nathan G. Hale, Jr. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1957. 158 pp. \$2.75. Without using technical terms, the authors explore the feelings and reactions of both the emotionally disturbed patient and his family. This handbook aims to help the family better understand and cope with these feelings and so establish a sympathetic and supportive relationship with the sick relative. Information on practical aspects of treatment and care is included.

**THE FAMILY AND MENTAL ILLNESS.** By Samuel Southard. 96 pp. \$1.50. This handbook written by a minister is addressed to physicians and pastors, and to families which are affected by emotional illness. It offers assistance to such families in recognizing symptoms of illness and readjusting to the sick member's physical absence or emotional inability to share in family life. Families are encouraged to seek professional help and given assistance in finding it. The author, besides offering concrete suggestions to alleviate the anxiety caused by this experience, discusses what he believes to be the place of religion in therapy.

**MENTAL ILLNESS: A Guide for the Family.** By Edith M. Stern. Harper and Brothers. Third revised edition. 1957. 95 pp. \$2.50. (Also available in pamphlet form without the foreword by William C. Menninger, M.D. The National Association for Mental Health, Inc., 1957, 95 pp. \$5.00.) A practical book addressed to the

relatives of the mentally ill person requiring hospitalization. Describes what mental illness is, why hospital care is sometimes needed and just what goes on inside a mental hospital. The author has real understanding of the emotional difficulties a family faces at such a time.

**PLAYMAKING WITH CHILDREN FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL.** By Winifred Ward. Appleton, Century Crofts, Inc. Second edition. 1957. 341 pp. \$3.50. Though designed primarily for elementary and Junior High School teachers, this book is nevertheless a storehouse of ideas for camp counselors, club leaders, religious group teachers, and interested parents. Many different forms of dramatic expressions are included with emphasis on their value to the children rather than as ends in themselves.

**POTENTIALITIES OF WOMEN IN THE MIDDLE YEARS.** Edited by Irma H. Gross. Michigan University Press. 1956. 198 pp. \$3.00. This volume, a symposium by a variety of specialists, is a somewhat academic consideration of the problems of the middle aged woman, but chapters on the physical, social, economic and "adjustment" aspects of this phase of life make it an interesting attempt to throw light on a subject likely to be of increasing importance.

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## Highlights of CSAA annual report

In 1950 the Child Study Association of America celebrated its 68th year as the oldest national parent education organization in the country. Several important trends stood out as the Association took a long, searching look at its current program and viewed the progress of parent education in the past seven decades:

- A growing awareness by laymen and professional persons that the parent-child relation is crucial to emotional health and that parent education is a key preventive measure in the fight against the mounting cost and human misery of mental illness.
- A growing competence in the mass media to deal honestly and effectively with parent education material and a corresponding willingness of editors and publishers to seek professional guidance in bringing sound information to public attention.
- A growing alertness among persons in the field to the need for well-trained leadership and high, responsible, professional standards.
- A growing acceptance of the importance of continued testing and evaluation of on-going and projected programs.

During the year there was significant growth in the strength and outreach of the Association's program. Particularly fruitful was the staff consultation with the research personnel of the project, "Social Science and Parent Education," sponsored jointly by the Russell Sage Foundation and the Child Study Association of America.

### **Leadership training**

The *Leadership Training Program*, instituted by the Association on an experimental basis in 1950, has since become a major focal point. Several reports on this basic training in parent group leadership for qualified professional persons were presented at conferences throughout this country and in Canada. Among those subsequently published in leading professional journals were two reports recently reprinted by the U.S. Children's Bureau in a pamphlet entitled, "New Approaches to Maternity Care."

During the year, training was completed for 25 public health and maternity nurses, representing city and county health departments, public and private hospitals in the metropolitan area.

At the request of the New York State Department of Health, the Association also conducted a special intensive program of training for a small



group of public health nurses in the techniques of supervision.

### **Group education**

The *Department of Parent Group Education* continued its demonstration discussion group program at New York headquarters. Two experimental groups were set up at the request of the College of Medicine, State University of New York, for parents of children suffering from the rare, and usually fatal blood diseases, Cooley's anemia and sickle-cell anemia. Led by a CSAA staff member, this project was an extension of work previously done, either in a consultative or advisory capacity, to help parents of children with special handicaps. The staff continued to serve as consultants to a group of parents of children with familial dysautonomia at Babies Hospital.

### **Program advisory service**

The *Program Advisory Service*, for which the Association received a three-year grant from the Ittleson Family Foundation, became one of the major means of rendering national service. Altogether, this Service had contacts—either by correspondence, office interview, speaking engagements or field visits—with more than 250 communities from 43 states, Canada, South Africa, England, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and Japan. Field visits were made to Michigan, Missouri, Virginia, Pennsylvania and Washington, D. C.

### **Counseling**

The *Counseling Department* is increasingly confident of the potential contribution of educational counseling as a means of preventing emotional problems in children. Established three years ago as a pilot project in short-term counseling, it is continuing to test the tentative criteria for eligibility to this service. The Association is applying for a research grant to make possible a critical study of this approach to mental health.

### Publications

Two new pamphlets for parents were published: "What Makes A Good Home?" by Anna W. M. Wolf and Margaret C. Dawson, and "The Why and How of Discipline" by Aline B. Auerbach.

In another category of *Publications*, several new reprints from professional journals were added to the increasing list of papers prepared by the staff, most of them growing out of the Leadership Training Program.

The Association's quarterly journal, *CHILD STUDY*, continued to bring to its readers important current thinking in child development and parent-child relations. The Winter issue, an examination of changing concepts in home and hospital care of the sick child, was sold out immediately. A special reprint of all the major articles is now available.

One of several Association efforts to reach a new and truly mass audience, an experimental column in *True Story*, showed surprising strength in 1956. In a survey of *True Story's* readership undertaken by a competing magazine, the column rated second in reader interest.

### Book review committee

The *Book Review Committee* evaluated nearly 300 new books. Ten thousand copies of the 1956 "Parent's Bookshelf" were distributed as a public service.

In 1956, the Association received the first payment on a three-year grant from the Eda K. Loeb Foundation to improve the Association's library facilities. Much progress was made in cataloguing a hitherto unprocessed accumulation of books and invaluable research documents.

### Children's book committee

The *Children's Book Committee* prepared a new story book for children: *More Read to Yourself Stories—Fun and Magic*, published by Thomas Y. Crowell Company in October 1956. The Committee also prepared its Annual List; a supplement to the cumulative list, "Bible Stories and Books About Religion for Children," and did the final work on a unique new list, "Latin America in Books for Boys and Girls," published by the Pan-American Union.\*

### Conference and Institute

Two events each year continue to illustrate the Association's outreach to the general public, and to professional personnel. These are the *Annual Conference* and the *Annual Institute for Workers in Parent Education*. The 1956 Conference: "Wanted—Responsible Individuals" was attended

by about 1000 people from many parts of the United States. Registration for the two-day Institute was approximately 400, representing professional and lay leaders from agencies and organizations concerned with parent education across the country and in Canada.

### Foundation help

In addition to the foundation grants already referred to, the Association gratefully acknowledges the continuing support of several family foundations. Special mention should be made of the generous support given by the Grant Foundation.

### Volunteers

The year 1956 was marked also by the invaluable help given the Association by the large group of volunteers, whose zeal has brought success to our benefits and other fund raising efforts. They have also assisted the Association in many other ways, including hours of work on research projects and as members of volunteer committees.

### Budget

Simultaneous strengthening of the Association's basic program and greater service to professional workers and organizations in the parent education field necessarily increased the cost of operations from a total of \$137,856.00 in 1955 to \$149,010.00 in 1956. In spite of this increase, the year ended without a deficit, as the Board of Directors decided to use part of a reserve fund to write off a comparatively small operating deficit of \$1,636.21. In making this decision, the Board recognized the necessity of raising sufficient income to match further program expansion in 1957.

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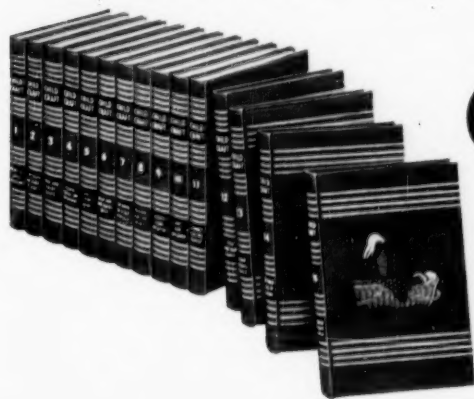
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